



Technical cooperation among  
developing countries

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HIGH-LEVEL COMMITTEE ON THE REVIEW  
OF TECHNICAL COOPERATION AMONG  
DEVELOPING COUNTRIES  
Tenth session  
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Item 7 of the provisional agenda\*

CONSIDERATION OF REPORTS OF THE ADMINISTRATOR OF THE  
UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

SUMMARY

The present document is submitted in compliance with paragraphs 2 and 5 of decision 9/3 and paragraph 1 of decision 9/4 of the High-level Committee on the Review of Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries regarding:

- (a) The implementation of the guidelines for the review of policies and procedures by the United Nations development system concerning technical cooperation among developing countries (decision 9/3, para. 2);
- (b) Organizational and supportive arrangements for technical cooperation among developing countries, such as administrative, legal, informational and financial arrangements (decision 9/3, para. 5, and decision 9/4, para. 1).

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I. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE GUIDELINES FOR THE REVIEW OF  
POLICIES AND PROCEDURES BY THE UNITED NATIONS  
DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM CONCERNING TECHNICAL COOPERATION  
AMONG DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

1. In its decision 8/1, the High-level Committee on the Review of Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries took note of the guidelines and recommendations approved by the Administrative Committee on Coordination and requested the organizations of the United Nations system to apply them on an experimental basis. It called upon the Administrative Committee to monitor them and the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to report on implementation of the decision. The Administrator submitted a report to the High-level Committee at its 9th meeting explaining the position and indicating that a meeting of the agency focal points in 1995 would consider the issue in depth. In its decision 9/2, the High-level Committee called upon the meeting of the agency focal points to review the status of the guidelines, refine and improve them and prepare a report for consideration by the Administrative Committee on Coordination. The present report provides an overview of the status of the application of the guidelines.

2. The guidelines emphasized four elements as vital to the promotion of technical cooperation among developing countries (TCDC). First, there should be a system-wide understanding of the definition of TCDC. Second, training, financing, the organizing of focal points, networking and the availability of databases on capacities should be recognized as the core policy elements for the promotion of TCDC and measures taken to strengthen them. Third, staff of the organizations of the United Nations development system should be properly instructed and oriented to apply TCDC in technical cooperation programmes. Finally, every organization should have a strong mechanism for monitoring and reviewing the utilization of TCDC. At the meeting of the agency focal points held on 6 June 1995 in New York, following the ninth session of the High-level Committee, there was substantial agreement on the continued validity of the guidelines and many organizations reported gains in the application of TCDC as a result of the emphasis on the four elements identified above. The meeting decided that agencies and organizations should keep the guidelines under review and strengthen the internal practice of monitoring and evaluating TCDC activities.

3. The reports submitted by the organizations for the tenth session of the High-level Committee generally indicate that the guidelines are effective and a further expansion of the use of TCDC has indeed taken place since the ninth session. It has been suggested that the decentralization of operations in the various agencies has greatly facilitated the promotion of TCDC. The International Labour Organization (ILO), the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the World Health Organization (WHO), in particular, claim that, owing to decentralization of decision-making and the management of operations at the regional and subregional level, TCDC has attracted increased attention. The ILO multidisciplinary teams and UNFPA regional teams, because of their operation at the regional and subregional level, have tended to give increased attention to the TCDC modality in technical cooperation activities. Moreover, in many

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regional and subregional programmes, TCDC has become the modality of first choice. The reports from the International Trade Centre (ITC), the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and the regional economic commissions specifically highlight that fact. Networking is also reported as an important vehicle for the promotion of TCDC. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), ILO, UNIDO, Habitat, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and the regional commissions repeatedly underscore the point. Networking is used not only as a basis for promoting collaboration in research and training and the exchange of experience, but also for problem solving, as in the case of the urban management activities carried out by Habitat, investment promotion by UNCTAD and the abatement of pollution by UNIDO.

4. Such progress has been the result of persistent sensitization efforts by the various TCDC focal points, the organization of orientation programmes and the issuing of clear and consistent instructions. It is noteworthy that the focal point arrangement in many organizations is not confined to one specially designated unit. Operational divisions and field units are also required to have focal points. In some organizations, orientation for project directors and programme managers has become a regular feature of their training activities. The Special Unit for TCDC has also introduced a TCDC training module for country teams in the context of the ILO Turin Training Centre programmes. At the request of agencies, the Special Unit issued elaborate instructions to the resident representatives and organizations and agencies of the United Nations development system following the meeting of the High-level Committee in 1995. Some agencies have issued their own instructions on the guidelines. UNFPA issued new instructions in 1996; in 1996 the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) also issued instructions to convenors of teams for the preparation of subregional programmes and to directors of regional institutions. The Universal Postal Union (UPU) issued detailed instructions to national postal authorities, restricted unions of postal workers and regional advisers. For its part, FAO issued two brochures, "An Innovative Approach in Technical Cooperation: Use of Experts for TCDC/TCCT" and "Programme of Cooperation with Academic and Research Institutions".

5. Two interesting initiatives should be specially noted. ITC has undertaken the preparation of a paper on TCDC and economic cooperation among developing countries (ECDC) that will seek to strengthen the application of those modalities in technical cooperation activities. UPU is carrying out a pilot study to assess the TCDC capacity of countries, their willingness to undertake operations utilizing the TCDC modality and the attitude of donor countries in supporting such activities. The results of these exercises should prove useful in the review of the guidelines in future.

6. In view of the continued validity of the guidelines and the fact that it was felt that there was no immediate need for their modification, the various organizations and agencies decided to acquire more experience before reporting to the Administrative Committee on Coordination. A meeting of agency focal points is scheduled for May 1997, when the subject will be reviewed further and a decision taken regarding the specific recommendations to be submitted to the Administrative Committee.

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II. ORGANIZATIONAL AND SUPPORTIVE ARRANGEMENTS FOR TECHNICAL COOPERATION AMONG DEVELOPING COUNTRIES, SUCH AS ADMINISTRATIVE, LEGAL, INFORMATION AND FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS

7. In paragraph 5 of its decision 9/3, the High-level Committee invited the Executive Board of UNDP to provide adequate staff and the necessary support to the Special Unit in order to enable it to carry out its responsibilities and to respond to the decisions on new directions for TCDC. In paragraph 1 of its decision 9/4, it welcomed the efforts of the Administrator to increase the allocation of resources for technical cooperation among developing countries.

8. During the biennium 1995-1996, the Special Unit functioned with its budgeted staff complement of seven Professional and nine General Service posts. During 1996, one Professional staff member retired and another accepted voluntary termination of his services. However, those vacancies are in the process of being filled.

9. The allocation under special programme resources for TCDC during the period 1992-1996 was \$13.3 million, including a carry-over of \$2.8 million from the previous cycle. Actual expenditure during 1992-1995 was \$8.4 million and estimated 1996 expenditure should amount to \$3.0 million, resulting in total projected expenditures of \$11.4 million during the period 1992-1996. In 1996 Japan also made available \$2 million from the existing Human Resources Development Fund within UNDP for the promotion of TCDC. A number of projects have been identified for funding from this source.

10. The TCDC programme for 1997-1999 has been prepared on the basis of an allocation of an estimated \$15 million, or 0.05 per cent of the overall UNDP resources, plus a carry-over from the current cycle of \$1.9 million. In addition, a Trust Fund on South-South Cooperation has been established in accordance with General Assembly resolution 50/119 of 20 December 1995. Both developed and developing countries have been invited to contribute to the Fund. It is estimated that an additional \$10 million will be contributed to the Trust Fund during the period 1997-1999.

11. The above-mentioned situation is brought to the attention of the High-level Committee for information.

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